U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2004 NORFOLK, VA For further information contact Deanna Warren 757-441-6331

Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Franklin Leighton Wentworth, age 27, of Jamaica, New York, was sentenced to 292 months in federal prison in the U.S. District Court in Norfolk yesterday on a charge of possession of 249 grams of crack cocaine with intent to distribute and possession of a loaded firearm.

Wentworth was originally arrested by Virginia Beach police on September 6, 2003, on state drug and firearms charges. The Virginia Beach police set up a controlled purchase and arrested Wentworth as he got out of his car to deliver nine ounces of crack to another individual. His case was referred for federal prosecution under Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN)/Project EXILE and he was indicted by a federal grand jury on April 14, 2004. Wentworth pled guilty on June 8, 2004.

Project Safe Neighborhoods/Project EXILE is a multi-agency joint federal and state task force targeting armed criminals for prosecution in federal court for possession or use of firearms in violation of federal laws. It is a nationwide effort by the Department of Justice aimed at reducing violent crimes. Since its inception in Hampton Roads in late 1997, PSN/EXILE has produced over 915 convictions and removed over 1622 firearms from armed criminals.

The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and task force agents working with the Virginia Beach Police Department. The case was prosecuted for the United States by Assistant United States Attorney James A. Metcalfe.